**Narrative Technique**

**Narrative** **structure**

* The plot may be circular rather than linear;
* The plot may build through the telling of many little stories to make up the larger story;
* The plot may unfold in a series of letters (an epistolary novel);
* The plot may be related by a series of narrators;
* The plot may unfold in a series of parallel stories with contrasting settings – as in Huckleberry Finn or Jane Eyre
* **Exposition –** the beginning; establishes
  + Setting (time and place)
  + Characters
  + Point of View (includes details to establish the reliability of the narrator, or – as in the case with the insane narrator of Faulkner’s The Sound and the Fury – the narrator’s lack of reliability)
  + Tone
  + Mood (atmosphere established by elements of setting)
  + Conflict
* Inciting moment – the situation/incident that sets all action in motion
* Complication – the rising action of the fiction; is made up of scenes of cause and effect
* Climax – the turning point of the fiction; the resolution of the conflict; one place to look when

considering theme

* Denouement – the unwinding of the action following the climax (unless the story has a surprise ending)
* End

A writer creates fiction as a concrete manifestation of the abstraction that is **theme** (a universal truth about life). The techniques that compose a finely crafted work of fiction lead the reader metaphorically to theme(s). Theme is always stated as a sentence.

\*\*\*\*\*In isolation of such components as characterization, use of language, or conflict, discussion of plot alone (merely the action) ignores the true craft of the skilled writer of fiction. Carefully crafted sentences (**syntax**) may, for example, help to develop character or differentiate narrators or expose the psychological differences in one character or highlight contrasts between two characters. Syntax may work together with other elements at the climax or to create a “literary climax,” an intellectual point of climax not yet manifested in the action of the fiction.